



the wyoming game and fish department

July 2016

CODY REGION newsletter

Game and Fish to host WAFWA summer meeting

The Wyoming Game and Fish Department welcomes the Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (WAFWA) to Cody for the 2016 summer meeting July 21-26.

The annual meeting will bring over 300 U.S. and Canadian fish and wildlife regulators to discuss shared biological, management, and land use issues. The event will attract professional fish and wildlife biologists (including commissioners and directors from over 20 states), managers, administrators, and others in fish and wildlife related fields. Events will be held at the Holiday Inn, Comfort Inn, and Buffalo Bill Cabin Village in Cody.

WAFWA is a regional association of state and provincial fish and wildlife agencies representing 23 states and Canadian provinces, an area encompassing 3.7 million square miles of some of North America's most wild and scenic country, inhabited by over 1,500 premier wildlife species. WAFWA's mission is to deliver conservation through information exchange and working partnerships. By working together, the fish and wildlife resources of the West and the habitat upon which those resources depend will be protected and enhanced so that future generations can enjoy our natural heritage. For more information, go to http://www.wafwa.org/events/summer_2016_conference/.



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Of interest

Cody Region welcomes Gerharter

The Wyoming Game and Fish Department welcomes new South Cody Game Warden Grant Gerharter to the Cody Region. Gerharter replaces Craig Smith who was recently promoted to Wildlife Supervisor in Sheridan.

As the South Cody Game Warden, Gerharter's duties include law enforcement, wildlife management, wildlife damage mitigation and education. The South Cody Game Warden district encompasses the South Fork and associated drainages, Oregon Basin and the backcountry of the Thorofare.

Gerharter said that he values the vast backcountry and diversity of wildlife Cody has to offer. "I was drawn to the remoteness of the district and the challenges it presents," Gerharter said. "The amount of wilderness and public land and the abundance of wildlife are impressive."

Originally from Thermopolis, Gerharter moved to Cody from Kaycee where he served as a game warden. Gerharter also served as a game warden in Casper and prior to his career with Game and Fish, worked in the medical field and as a professional outfitter and guide.

Gerharter earned a bachelor's degree in wildlife management from the University of Wyoming in 2003. He is an outdoor enthusiast who enjoys pack trips in the mountains, hunting and fishing.



Macroinvertebrate lesson

Fisheries Biologist Jason Burckhardt teaches participants from Kidz on the Move, a day camp for youth offered by the City of Cody, about macroinvertebrates at Newton Lakes last month.



Fisheries Biologist Jason Burckhardt shows kids a damselfly and other macroinvertebrates at Newton Lakes last month.

On the ground

Deer taken without a license

Last month, North Cody Game Warden Travis Crane received a stop poaching report regarding a deer that was observed hanging in a storage shed near a residence in Cody. When Crane followed up on the report, he observed a deer hanging in the shed that appeared to have been there for some time. Crane interviewed the owner of the property, who advised Crane that he had been given the deer last fall and had failed to take care of it. Through additional interviews, it was determined the subject had shot the deer last fall and did not have a deer license. The man was found guilty of taking a deer without a license and fined \$790.

Right: A deer that was harvested without a license and left to waste in a shed at a Cody residence.



Patrolling Bighorn Lake



Game Warden Coordinator Scott Werbelow contacts a fisherman on Bighorn Lake near Lovell to check his fishing license.



Lovell Game Warden James Hobbs records the number of fish harvested by a fisherman on Bighorn Lake.

On the ground

Habitat assessments

Biologists with Game and Fish performed multiple rapid habitat assessments last month.

Rapid habitat assessments are an inventory assessment method that allows biologists to quickly assess the condition of habitat for wildlife populations. These assessments capture a snapshot in time to determine how the habitat is doing in relation to the number of animals on the landscape.

During an assessment, biologists look at species diversity, level of browse on plant communities, conifer encroachment, erosion, invasive plant species and structural diversity in the plant community. Biologists then use the information, along with big game population surveys, public input and other information, to help determine population objectives for big game herds.



Terrestrial Habitat Biologist Jerry Altermatt determines the species of willow present at a site in the Bighorn Mountains during a rapid habitat assessment.

Bighorn Mountains moose surveys

During a one-week survey window in June, Game and Fish personnel conducted moose surveys along established routes on the west-slope of the Bighorn Mountains in Moose Hunt Area 42. The purpose of the survey is to provide a trend in moose numbers over time, by looking in the same places year after year. The survey was first conducted in 2015 and data collected will help guide management of moose in this hunt area. During this survey effort, a total of 24 moose were observed.



Above: A moose observed by Greybull Biologist Leslie Schreiber in the Bighorn Mountains during a recent moose survey.



Left: A moose observed near Granite Creek in the Bighorn Mountains.